

## Open Call for Papers for TWO Economics Conferences

Selections will be based on objective peer review of applications received for individually proposed papers and proposed organized sessions. Applications for papers require only a brief abstract and justification statement—not a draft of the paper. **Deadline: April 20, 2011**

*SGE Sessions*  
at the Annual Conference of the  
**Southern Economic Association**  
Washington, DC – November 19-21, 2011



*SGE Sessions*  
at the Annual Conference of the  
**Allied Social Science Association/  
American Economic Association**  
Chicago, IL – January 6-8, 2012



The Society of Government Economists would normally have its own conference in Washington, DC, in November. This November, however, the Southern Economic Association is having its annual conference in Washington, so we have decided to join forces with them. The SEA has graciously allocated eight sessions at their conference to the SGE. Under a similar arrangement we have seven sessions that we organize at the ASSA/AEA meetings.

Our motivation for organizing these sessions is to promote economic thought that is beneficial to government economists. Sessions will be designed to inform and educate economists, to provide valuable contributions to existing knowledge and understanding of economic ideas, and to foster potential improvements in how economics is practiced. Such sessions should better enable economists to observe and understand the nature and causes of economic factors and events, which will, in turn, enhance their ability to contribute to public decision making.

Sessions involve the presentation of 3-5 papers, which are reviewed by discussants and which allow for a question-and-answer period. (Sessions containing as many as 5 papers are discouraged unless there is a strong concern that not all of the papers will be presented due to absences.)

As indicated below, entire sessions or individual papers may be proposed. In the case of individual papers, the Society will organize selected papers into sessions and invite individuals to serve as discussants of those papers.

**Applications for paper presentations and for entire sessions will only be accepted from SGE members** (with existing membership status or purchase of membership on the deadline date of the application). Membership (costing \$25 per year) is open to anyone who shares the SGE's interest in the promotion of government economics. Membership is required for session organizers, and for at least one author of each proposed paper (whether the paper is independently proposed or part of a proposed session). Session organizers who propose entire sessions will be responsible for ensuring that at least one author of each paper is an SGE member. Session organizers may purchase memberships for others in their proposed session on their behalf. Discussants and session chairs, who are not also session organizers or paper presenters, need not be SGE members to participate in an SGE-sponsored session.

**All session participants must also pay for registration at the conference they are attending. (SGE members who want to attend only a single session at the SEA conference are NOT exempted from this requirement.)**

## Opportunity to Apply to Either Conference

Because the SEA and ASSA/AEA conferences have similar audiences, and because the total number of sessions at both conferences (15) is limited, **proposed papers and proposed sessions can only be accepted to one of the conferences—not to both.** However, those applicants who wish to be considered for both conferences may apply to both, where such applicants should state which of the two conferences they would most prefer to attend if accepted to both.

This is how the selections will be made: All proposed papers and sessions specify if the application is for (1) the SEA Conference Only, (2) the ASSA/AEA Conference only, or (3) both. Of those choosing (3), they will be asked to choose either (3a)—a preference for the SEA Conference, or (3b)—a preference for the ASSA/AEA conference. All those applying for the SEA Conference (or for both) will be peer reviewed equally for the SEA conference sessions without regard to whether they applied to one or both. Similarly, all those applying to the ASSA/AEA conference will be peer reviewed equally regardless of whether they applied to the one or both.

Of those that are selected initially to the SEA conference, all will be assumed to be presenting at the SEA conference except for those who: (i) applied to both, (ii) were accepted to both, and (iii) expressed a preference for the ASSA/AEA meetings. Likewise, all applications that are initially accepted for the ASSA/AEA meetings will be assumed to be presenting at those meetings unless they applied for both, expressed a preference for the SEA meetings, and were also initially accepted to the SEA meetings. Those papers or sessions that are initially selected to both conferences, when they are then allocated to one of the two conferences on the basis of their stated preference, create a vacancy for another paper or session to be accepted in the other conference. Thus, a paper or session that was not initially selected may be selected in a second round as these vacancies arise.

### Selection Method for Proposed Papers and Sessions

Papers and sessions will be evaluated under the following rules and conditions:

- (1) **Papers and sessions will be peer-reviewed, in a double-blind process, on the basis of scientific merit, importance of the topic, insightfulness, uniqueness, and level of effort.** (In double-blind peer-review, the reviewers do not know the applicants' identity and the applicants do not know the reviewers' identity.)
- (2) Proposals will be evaluated and selected **without regard for whether the applicants are government economists.** The topics of the papers need not specifically address government policies or actions.
- (3) Paper proposals will be evaluated on the same basis regardless of whether they are made individually or as part of a proposed session. Thus, session proposals are evaluated on the basis of the perceived quality of the papers in that session.

Additional information about the selection process is provided below in **Appendix A: Peer-review Guidelines of the Society of Government Economists for the Selection of Papers and Sessions for Economic Conferences.**

## Application Form for Proposed Papers

Provide a complete application in one of the following ways: (1) Follow the instructions online at <http://www.sge-econ.org/conference-registration/>, (2) Fill in this application form and email it to [Steve.Payson@sge-econ.org](mailto:Steve.Payson@sge-econ.org), or (3) email the same information in an easily extractable form, in the same order of questions that appear in this application, to the same address.

Check below the conferences to which you are applying:

\_\_\_\_\_ SEA Conference in Washington DC (November 19-21, 2011)

\_\_\_\_\_ ASSA/AEA Conference in Chicago (January 6-8, 2012)

If you are applying to both, and are initially selected for both, your preference will be to attend: the \_\_\_\_\_ SEA conference or \_\_\_\_\_ the AEA conference (chose only one).

**Note: Do not send any *other* materials with your proposal, such as drafts of a paper or the resume of the applicant. In fairness to all applicants, additional materials that are not part of the application form will not be read.**

If this paper below is part of proposed session, then list the Session Title, Session Chair, and Session Organizer (if different from Session Chair)

1. Paper Title:

2. Author most responsible for Correspondence (First, Middle, Last):

3. If more than one author, all authors in the order they should appear in the citation (First, Middle, Last; First, Middle, Last; etc.)

4. Author Contact Information. Provide the Name, Title, Affiliation, Address, Email Address and Phone Number for each author of the paper.

**5. Authors of this paper willing to serve as Discussants (within the same or other sessions)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Topic Area(s) →</b>	
<input type="text"/>		

<b>Name</b>	<b>Topic Area(s) →</b>	
<input type="text"/>		

<b>Name</b>	<b>Topic Area(s) →</b>	
<input type="text"/>		

<b>Name</b>	<b>Topic Area(s) →</b>	
<input type="text"/>		

**6. If this paper is part of a proposed session, provide the name and full contact information of the proposed discussant.**

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**7. Authors of this paper willing to serve as Session Chairs (of other sessions)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Topic Area(s) →</b>	
<input type="text"/>		

<b>Name</b>	<b>Topic Area(s) →</b>	
<input type="text"/>		

<b>Name</b>	<b>Topic Area(s) →</b>	
<input type="text"/>		

<b>Name</b>	<b>Topic Area(s) →</b>	
<input type="text"/>		

8. **Abstract and justification statement** in support of the paper (to be evaluated on the basis of scientific merit, importance of the topic, insightfulness, uniqueness, and level of effort). Provide both a good description of the research and an argument as to why it is important and useful. **Maximum of 500 words**. To facilitate the double-blind peer-review process, ***AVOID STATEMENTS THAT REVEAL THE IDENTITY OF THE AUTHOR(S)***.

## Application Form for Proposed Sessions

Provide a complete application by filling in and sending from this section of this document, or provide the same information in an easily extractable form. Email this application to [Steve.Payson@sge-econ.org](mailto:Steve.Payson@sge-econ.org).

Applications for conference papers and sessions may be made simultaneously to both conferences, by filling a single application form. *If the application is made to both, and is accepted to both, then it is expected that the presentations will be made at both conferences.*

Provide a complete application in one of the following ways: (1) Follow the instructions online at <http://www.sge-econ.org/conference-registration/>, (2) Fill in this application form and email it to [2010-Conference@sge-econ.org](mailto:2010-Conference@sge-econ.org), or (3) email the same information in an easily extractable form, in the same order of questions that appear in this application, to the same address.

Check below the conferences to which you are applying:

\_\_\_\_\_ SEA Conference in Washington DC (November 19-21, 2011)

\_\_\_\_\_ ASSA/AEA Conference in Chicago (January 6-8, 2012)

If you are applying to both, and are initially selected for both, your preference will be to attend: the \_\_\_\_\_ SEA conference or \_\_\_\_\_ the AEA conference (chose only one).

**Note: Do not send any *other* materials with your proposal, such as drafts of papers or the resumes of the applicant. In fairness to all applicants, additional materials that are not part of the application form will not be read.**

List the Session Title, Session Chair, and Session Organizer (if different from Session Chair)

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**Complete an “Application Form for Proposed Papers” (in the previous section) for every paper that will be in the section, and provide these forms all together, pasted into one Word document for a single application for the session.**

**It is the session organizer’s responsibility to provide the entire application, including information about the individual papers, in one document to the SGE.**

Applications for papers within a proposed session must not also be proposed independently in another application. Authors must decide if they would like their papers proposed independently, subject to placement in an SGE-organized session, or listed as part of an organized session that is being proposed.

Of course, session organizers must not propose any paper for the session without prior collaboration and consent with the authors of that paper, and an understanding that at least one of the authors of the paper will present the paper at the conference(s) associated with the application.

## **Appendix A: Peer-review Guidelines of the Society of Government Economists for the Selection of Papers and Sessions for Economic Conferences**

### **Objectives**

The SGE currently organizes sessions for its own annual conference in Washington, DC, and sessions for the annual meetings of the American Economic Association and occasionally other conferences such as the Southern Economic Association meetings in 2011. The Society views these sessions as existing for the benefit of the audience that attends them, and, by extension, to the public at large that will benefit from the enhanced useful knowledge that is disseminated within and beyond the economics community. The calls for papers and organized sessions will be open to all individuals who share the Society's objectives. In the case of proposed, individual papers, the Society will organize selected papers into sessions and invite other individuals to serve as discussants in those sessions.

To ensure the quality of proposed papers or sessions, the Society will establish and maintain a formal, objective peer-review process. This process will exhibit no favoritism or bias regarding the proposals received, and will be based entirely on the information presented the applications. The Society will design the peer-review process to generate an ordinal *rating* of each application, where this rating will serve the following purposes:

- (1) To determine, first and foremost, if the paper or session is likely to be of sufficient quality to warrant the Society's support and promotion of its presentation,
- (2) To distinguish, among the papers and sessions proposed, which papers and sessions should be selected for acceptance, under the constraint of a limited number of possible sessions that the Society can support in a given conference.

The process will involve voluntary assistance by invited peer-reviewers from the economic community, and will also involve judgments by the Society's Board of Directors. All final decisions regarding such ratings and selections will ultimately be the responsibility of Board of Directors.

The Board will establish a Peer-review Committee to carry out the administrative aspects of the process, such as finding and communicating with peer-reviewers, and compiling statistics on ratings that they will present to the board. The Board will appoint a Chair and Vice Chair to this Committee, who may or may not be members of the Board, but who cannot already hold any of the following four positions: President, Vice President, Treasurer, or Executive Secretary, or Members of the Conference Committee.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee are then responsible for selecting all other members of the Peer-review Committee, where: (1) the majority of the members of the Committee are not SGE Board Members, and (2) the Board is made aware of the selection, and can veto any selection through a majority vote of the full Board.

### **Final Scoring of Papers and Sessions**

The Scoring Sheet below presents how proposed papers will be evaluated. For the purpose of fair competition among applications, applicants will be specifically asked to refrain from providing any additional information in support of their application. The Society will make clear that any such information will be discarded and not be allowed to enter the peer-review process.

The final score for any paper proposal will be the average of the scores received from the reviewers. Papers receiving the highest scores will be selected and grouped into sessions. For already proposed sessions, the scores of the papers within them will be compared to the scores of individual papers grouped into sessions, and sessions with the highest average scores among their papers will be selected.

## Scoring Sheet for Peer-Review of Proposed Papers

Instructions to Peer-reviewers: **Please read the definitions and counter-examples carefully for each criterion #1 to #7.** Then score each criterion #1 to #7 with a value from 0 to 5 in the right-most column of the table, where: 0=failure, 1=poor, 2=acceptable, 3=good, 4=very good, 5=excellent. (Use whole numbers only.)

Please note that the following factors should have absolutely no bearing on the scores given: (1) the prestige or popularity of the coauthors or the institution to which they belong, (2) any affiliation of the coauthors with any government or with the Society of Government Economists, (3) the number of coauthors of the proposed paper, and (4) the race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, or sexual orientation of the coauthors.

Criterion	Definitions and Counter-Examples	Weight (%)	Score (0-5)
1. Pertinence to Economics	The topic explored fits within the general context of “economics,” e.g., relating in a significant way to some of the existing literature in economic journals. Interdisciplinary research that involves economics is welcome and does not violate this criterion. <i>The vast majority of proposed papers would be expected to score a 5 for this criterion – cross out the 5 and put a different score only if warranted.</i>	25	(5)
2. Scientific Merit	Contributing to improved knowledge and useful understanding, and reflecting a level of thought that is challenging and noteworthy. This quality of the research is distinctly different from the presentation of esoteric or complex models where such complexity, itself, appears to be the goal. The presentation of highly complex, and technically challenging discourse is <i>not</i> discouraged, provided it would be seen by many economists as contributing to useful knowledge. <i>The average expected score among proposals received = 3.</i>	20	
3. Importance	Addressing topics that are important, as reflected by the implications of the research and/or the overall magnitude of the economic effects being studied. For example, the study of a phenomenon that strongly affects millions of people and involves billions of dollars would be greater in importance than one for which these magnitudes are much smaller. However, the study of a very particular, small effect, as an example of a more general phenomenon could also be important if it has broader implications. <i>(Average expected score = 3.)</i>	15	
4. Profound Implications	Legitimately challenging conventional wisdom, either because of important, new observations, or insightful and convincing analysis of existing phenomena. Most papers would <i>not</i> be expected to meet this criterion with a high score <i>(average expected score = 0 or 1).</i>	10	
5. Uniqueness	Reflecting creative and imaginative thinking, as opposed to, for example, repeating studies that have already been published, but with more current data or minor changes in an economic model. <i>(Average expected score = 3.)</i>	5	
6. Level of Effort	Extent of shear work (e.g., hours) on the project. This criterion would likely be violated, for example, if authors are primarily “recycling” research findings or explanations of models that they have already presented elsewhere. <i>(Average expected score = 3.)</i>	5	
7. Quality of the Proposal	Extent to which the proposal is well written. Proposals should also exhibit professional etiquette, e.g., respectful of alternative viewpoints in economics. Most proposals would be expected to receive a high score for this criterion <i>(average expected score = 4 or 5).</i>	3	
<b>REMAINDER TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PEER-REVIEW COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIETY OF GOVERNMENT ECONOMISTS</b>			
8. Preference for Little Previous History	Extent to which authors who have not previously presented a paper in a Society of Government Economists session: 5 for none of the coauthors presenting in the previous 2 years at any SGE event, 4 if none in the previous year, 3 if at least one coauthor has presented in the last year, but there is at least one coauthor who has not in the last 2 years, 2 if at least one coauthor has not presented in the last year (unless it qualifies for a higher score), 1 if no coauthor has presented more than once in the last two years, and 0 otherwise.	5	
9. Timeliness	5 if within the deadline, 4 if within a week of the deadline, 3 for between 1 and 2 weeks late, 2 for 2-3 weeks late, 1 for over 3 weeks late	2	
<b>SUBTOTAL WEIGHTED AVERAGE SCORE</b>			
10. Number of Proposals	Among all the papers received by the same coauthor for the conference in question, a 5 for the paper with the highest weighted average subtotal (for items 1-9), a 3 for the second-highest weighted average (if more than one exists), and a 0 for all other proposed papers.	10	
<b>TOTAL WEIGHTED AVERAGE SCORE x 20</b> (Providing a score ranging from 0 to 100)			